On Cannibal Cities

Cities are not only stone and steel; they are mouths. In peacetime, the city feeds on its surroundings. Grain flows in from the countryside, oil and wine descend from the hills, cattle and fish arrive from pastures and coasts. A city is a hunger machine, but its hunger is productive: it converts raw matter into markets, into culture, into life.

But when war comes, this order collapses. The mouth turns inward. The city consumes itself. The homes that once received are broken into rubble, and the rubble itself becomes fodder for the engines of destruction. What once nourished becomes food for fire.

I read reports of Gaza and I thought of Stalingrad: two sieges separated by nearly a century, yet bound by the

same anatomy. Streets become trenches, staircases become barriers, walls become teeth. The silence of broken neighborhoods is not empty; it feasts. Those trapped inside are no longer citizens but calories in the city's last meal.

This is why the metaphor of cannibalism is not rhetorical excess. It is not an image imposed from outside. It is a description of the process

itself. Human energy, meant to sustain life, is folded back into its own annihilation. The soldier is swallowed by the ruin, the ruin is swallowed by the soldier's memory, and beside them the old, the sick, the children, the women — all are reduced to fragments in the grinding.

Even victory tastes only of self. Empires that triumph leave behind cities devoured from within, monuments that

gape like empty stomachs. Civilization reveals itself as a strange eater: it feasts not only on its enemies, but also on its own bones.

Cannibalism, then, is the hidden logic of war. Not because soldiers literally eat flesh, but because the structures of life — the city, the people, the energy of survival — are rechanneled into a spiral of consumption that ends only when nothing

is left to feed on. When even
dust hungers.

Fragment

The city is a stomach,
grinding towers into flour.

Streets chew on streets,
steel gnaws bone.

Bodies of the living and the

fragile,
the young and the old,
the sick and the strong,
are swallowed together.

The rubble is meat,
the silence a feast.

Once, in Stalingrad,
families fed on silence.
Now, in Gaza,
silence feeds on families.

Do you ask what victory
tastes like?

It is the taste of your
neighbor’s marrow,
your child’s breath,
your mother’s last cry.

The world chews its people
and spits them into statistics.

Until there is nothing left but
dust —
and dust also hungers.